

## **HHC Update (1 November 2003)**

Since deploying to Iraq in early September, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-34 AR has served as the linchpin for the Task Force. The company is performing countless missions and operations in support of the Task Force.

Not only does HHC provide support for the Force Protection of Camp Manhattan and its soldiers, but also the company IS the Force Protection for the compound. Soldiers from the DFAC, Maintenance & Recovery, and Support Platoons provide crews to man the compound's main gate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition, Scouts, Mortars, and Maintenance soldiers are also occupying Observation Posts around the compound also on a 24/7 status. Furthermore, Support, DFAC, Maintenance, Headquarters, Commo, and soldiers from the various S shops provide guard force for detainees and EPWs, which has been a 24/7 operation as well. Finally, soldiers from Support and Headquarters platoon provide a Quick Reaction Force for the internal compound, along with providing escort and vehicular transportation of EPWs from Camp Manhattan to larger prisons with the Division's area of operations.

The soldiers of HHC perform these missions in addition to the roles described by their various MOS. Mechanics not only have to main guard posts, but they continue to provide the necessary maintenance on all the Task Force vehicles. The professionalism and cohesion is paramount in the daily operations of the PLL clerks, mechanics and recovery soldiers, and hands down they keep the Task Force rolling, literally.

Support Platoon continues to provide the Class III (Fuel and Oils) and Class V (Ammunition) for the entire

Task Force. They run numerous convoy missions to aid the other sections and the Task Force in the re-supply operations, whether it is hauling food back to the compound for the cooks, wire and wood to continue to build up the compound's defenses, parts for vehicles or equipment for soldiers. The platoon also maintains a 24/7 guard force at the Ammunition Holding Area on the compound. Additionally, Support Platoon has been the first response unit during two Iraqi Protests outside of the camp's main gate, serving to provide additional show of force and riot control.

The DFAC section, as stated earlier, plays a heavy role in the overall force protection of the compound. However, the section's greatest contribution to the Task Force could be hot meals. After almost two weeks of straight MREs, the soldiers from DFAC worked relentlessly to get hot food for the task force, and to date has prepared and served over 90 meals. Warm food is as crucial to soldier morale and welfare as any bullet, vehicle, or even piece of mail, and the soldiers in DFAC continue to serve the Task Force with distinction in this critical area.

The Mortar platoon is also serving in an important role as part of the force protection. As mentioned earlier, the Mortar platoon occupies two observation posts daily, as well as providing 2 squads to remain on call to conduct traffic control check points, riot control, local business inspections, and to fire combat mortar missions in support of any Task Force elements operating outside the compound.

The Scout Platoon has taken part on nearly every mission assigned to the Task Force since its arrival at Camp Manhattan. The Scouts not only man observation posts both with the

## HHC Update (1 November 2003)

compound for the camp security, but also outside the compound, serving as the Task Force's reconnaissance element. The Scouts have also experienced success during several route patrols and building searches and area blockades throughout numerous Task Force missions.

The Medical Platoon has truly been lifesavers here in Iraq. They have had the unfortunate tasks of treating soldiers inflicted with combat wounds, and have done so with the greatest of skill and professionalism. Additionally, the medics conduct 24-hour operations, primarily out of their Aid Station; however, EVERY patrol or Task Force operation has a medic or medical team present to ensure quick response. The Aid Station also stays busy with the numerous minor ailments and injuries that originate from daily operations in theatre the likes of Iraq

Finally, the Headquarters Platoon continues to fill the gaps and plug the holes throughout the vast area assigned to HHC. These soldiers participate in the detainee/EPW guard force, the QRF, and numerous other missions assigned to improve the status and safety of the compound. Additionally, Headquarters maintains the company's tactical operations center 24/7, keeping information flow constant between the various elements within the Task Force and within the company itself.

As for overall living conditions and day-to-day life, the soldiers of HHC are doing quite well. Current typical living conditions consist of four solid walls, a roof and hard floors, interspersed with the cots of the various sections' soldiers. All the sections now have generators to supply electricity and have utilized soldier ingenuity to create showers for each section as well. Mail is

coming on a regular basis from the States, which all the soldiers appreciate beyond words, and as stated earlier, the company is getting hot meals as well. Within the next few weeks the company is looking to move into a new set of barracks, which are currently being renovated, and they will have electricity, better protection from the weather and other elements, and provide more privacy for the soldiers. Additionally, the compound's Moral, Welfare, and Recreation building is nearing completion, and within the coming month, it is anticipated that Internet service and phone service will become more readily available to the soldiers (so start sending phone cards now!). Nearly every section of the company has pooled together enough funds so that each has a television and satellite, so after about a month and a half stint, the men are getting up on current events as they happen around the world and back at home in the states.

All of these missions and tasks are on going and critical to the welfare and safety of all the soldiers stationed at Camp Manhattan. In true HHC fashion, the company is providing all levels of support, service, and logistical assets for the Task Force; thereby enabling the other companies to successfully execute their missions all around the central Iraq region. All of the soldiers of HHC are hanging in there and making the most of this difficult situation. All miss their families and cherish the letters, packages, and support you send them. Make no mistake about it, HHC, and your husbands, sons, and brothers, are serving the Centurion Task Force, the Army, and our Nation proudly.